

January 12, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR: UMass School of Law Faculty

FROM: Ramprasad Balasubramanian,  
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Spring 2026 Faculty Instructional Responsibilities

The UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook comprehensively states the guidelines for course procedures. I encourage you to use the guidelines when preparing for and teaching your courses. These guidelines outline certain basic practices that promote meaningful educational experiences. These guidelines and expectations are distributed every semester to reaffirm their importance to our students, the faculty, and the University.

#### OFFICE HOURS

All full-time faculty members must schedule, post, and keep regular in-person office hours. A minimum of four hours per week is required. Additional office hours should be scheduled by appointment. Faculty members should be available during course registration periods to meet with their advisees to discuss course selection and progress toward degree completion. Part-time lecturers must make themselves accessible to students outside of class hours to discuss course-related issues.

#### COURSE SYLLABI

Faculty members shall provide a syllabus for each course they teach no later than the day of the first class meeting. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

Instructors shall clearly outline all course requirements and procedures at the first class meeting each semester. In accordance with the ABA Managing Director's June 2015 Guidance Memo on Standards 301, 302, 314, and 315, learning outcomes for individual courses must be published in the course syllabi. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

As an additional resource, please consider the following [Guidelines for Syllabus Development and Content](#).

Syllabi must also contain a link to the Omnibus Syllabus Language available at <https://www.umassd.edu/law/academics/omnibus-syllabus-language/> or the full text of the language found at that link. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: III. Course Requirements.

#### FACULTY MISSING CLASSES

All planned absences for legitimate professional or personal reasons must be approved by the Law School Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in advance. When an illness or unforeseen emergency results in the cancellation of a class, the instructor should notify the

LEC as soon as possible and arrange for notices to be posted informing students of the cancellation, including a notification to students sent by email through COIN. Consistent with the UMass Law Credit Hours Policy (see UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Appendix C), time lost due to cancellation of classes must be made up. In scheduling make-up classes, instructors shall ensure they are not creating conflicts with the schedules of their students, other instructors, or the Academic Support Program. Instructors shall notify the LEC of the date and time of rescheduled classes. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Administrative Regulations & Procedures: XI. Class Cancellations & Make-Up Classes

#### FINAL EXAMINATIONS

A written examination shall be given at the end of the semester in most courses. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: V. Examinations

#### GRADES

Instructors determine and assign grades according to the definitions in the faculty handbook. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Academic Regulations & Procedures: VI. Grades & Grading

#### LOCATION OF CLASS AND MODALITY

Faculty may not move their class to a new room without the approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Faculty seeking a room change should contact the Dean's Office. Faculty shall not change the course modality without the Dean's written approval. UMass School of Law Faculty Handbook, Administrative Regulations & Procedures: VIII. Class Scheduling

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting and adhering to these practices.

I wish you a productive semester.